A Cultural Heritage Conservation Strategy in the Context of Urban Development
(The Case of Kathmandu, Nepal)

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INTRODUCTION: CONTEXT

Considerations of an urban cultural heritage conservation strategy cannot be made based on conservation needs alone. Developmental issues have also to be taken into the picture *per se* and in terms of strategy required to overcome both conservational and developmental problems.

Or to put it another way: The problems of urban heritage conservation must also be considered as developmental problems. Based on this the aim of this article is to sketch a cultural heritage conservation strategy in the context of urban development - with specific reference to the case of Kathmandu, Nepal.

This view on problems of urban cultural heritage conservation is not new in Europe. Where this, in fact, is part of an old debate related to the role of the indigenous population, and local governments, in the urban conservation and development process and the degree of modernization and development of our historical cities. (Geddes 1986, Appleyard 1979, Isar 1986).

This has actuality in the case of the inner cities of many Historical Cities of Asia where the number of inhabitants actually are growing, and where the historical core still is the city’s centre for economic activity and growth catering for the city and its “upland”. These inner cities are assumed to be “generative” rather that “parasitic”.

My points of departure for strategy considerations are twofold. On the one hand we have to take the nature of the historic Asian cities into consideration. These cities have mostly the urban

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2 “A city will be designated as generative if its impact on economic growth is favourable, i.e., if its formation and continued existence and growth is one of the factors accountable for the economic development of the region or country in which it is located. A city will be considered parasitic if it exerts the opposite impact” (Hoselitz, 1955 page 279).
structure intact, but with a tremendous pressure from a growing population, and resulting privatization and commercialization in front of a small scale economy and business potential.

The other point deals with the participation perspective. Most of the nations in South Asia are market oriented and what Myrdal calls “soft states” (Myrdal 1968). The role of central as well as local governments are marginal. In a process of conservation and development efforts, it becomes essential to work “with the people”. Awareness raising, peoples participation in decision making and their active mobilization become in focus. A main challenge is to sustain peoples representative organizations.

Looking at the process of development or underdevelopment within the historic cities of South Asia, there are, very generalized, dual processes. It is of importance to recognize this both in terms of strategy response and when it comes to the required extent of external interventions. On the one hand we see some parts of the city centre as “growth centres”, developing fast, with economic potential and positive, generative role. On the other hand, there are parts of the historic centres of the Asian cities, in particular in a LDC like Nepal, which suffer from social and economic underdevelopment. In transition zones we face the problem of gentrification, which is “the process of invasion of well located and attractive low-income areas by middle and higher income population” (Nientied et al. 1982). The result is that the “economically weaker sections” are marginalized. However, in the inner cities of South Asia, commercialization of a growing corporate sector, is the main threat. The small scale economy represents an economic potential locally, but also a threat to conservation and housing needs.

Areas of interest of conservation, in the Newari towns of the Kathmandu valley, are mainly in the “nucleus” of the city centres planned on a Hinduist and Buddhist basis (Piper, 1975; Rykwert 1976; Gutschow, 1982, and Tiwari 1988; with references to Hindu city planning code and the history of development of the Kathmandu valley cities). There was a social concentric stratification around the religious centre and the palace. However, the periphery, with the low caste and class settlements also are significant parts of the city in an attempt to conserve the “real” picture of the social organization and physical environment.

The strategy, and resulting project proposal, which will be presented here is based on what I call: “The Living City Concept”. Conserving and developing Kathmandu as a “Living City” implies sustaining its strong identity of the past, but living physical and cultural heritage, and contemporary cultural activities; its economic potential, the habitation of the original population which is still in majority, and its potential for improved self-reliance through a reinforced local government structure.

The point of departure is a positive concept of growth within the historical cities. An economically sustainable situation is seen as necessary for the upkeeping of the historical heritage and conserving the environment. This should, in the longer term, be in the interest of sustained economic growth in addition to improving the quality of the habitable environment through the upkeeping of the historical heritage.

Therefore a strategy, aiming at conserving the historical inner cities of Asia, can not aim at conservation measures alone. It becomes a challenge, both within the formal and informal processes of development, to relate the conservation perspective to developmental efforts, or to initiate a planning and implementation of conservation in the context of urban development and environment.

This article will mainly review the attempts of
a project proposal to formulate a strategy of urban conservation in the context of development and environment. The project is entitled "Kathmandu Urban Heritage Conservation and Development Project" (Bjønness 1992 b). The project is under consideration for finance by the involved parties, His Majesty’s Government of Nepal (HMG/N), UNDP and UNESCO. It was a participatory project development process where the premises in a situation of a changing institutional framework for urban development and conservation was openly discussed and clarified (Bjønness ed. 1992 a).

The article is organized in four parts. In part one, the value base and the overall ideas behind the project are outlined. What is behind a positive departure like the “Living City” concept, and how can it be used in formation of objectives for the project? How can this concept facilitate a planning and implementation of conservation in the context of urban development and environment?

Secondly, in part two, the questions are: What are the specific problems and the processes of change threatening the ancient historical monuments, the urban identity and structure in the case of Kathmandu? What are the issues of conservation and development in Kathmandu?

Thirdly in part three, what could be the adequate responses, limited to the scope of a project? What are the shifts in project strategy this project addresses and the main project content in terms of human resource development, planning approach, skill training and project organization?

And finally, in conclusion: In Nepal, and Asia today, what are the project challenges of historical inner cities conservation in a context of developmental and environmental upgrading needs? What could be the influence of an increased international importance to culture in the context of development?

PART 1 “Living city” concept, challenges of planning and international collaboration.

It is of overall importance to take a constructive departure working with the complexity of issues and magnitude of problems related to upgrading of historical inner cities. However, in a process of fast and accelerating change, the complexity of the situation, as well as the vested interests involved, should not be underestimated. The process of works, with the project document, started with asking: what could be the main elements of a strategy of inner city upgrading in the interest of the indigenous population? The reply, is a project strategy, with objectives and methodology based on a fourfold approach within the concept of “living city” to historical inner city upgrading.4

(i) to strengthen the identity of people and place and an indigenous development based on civic pride and awareness.

Kathmandu still has its significant identity of

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3 The full reference for the project is: His Majesty’s Government of Nepal (HMG/N)/UNESCO / UNDP Project NEP 92 / 004.

4 I am indebted to professor Wu Liangyong, Beijing; and professor Edgar Ribeiro, New Delhi, for insight into their work. The 4th Asian Congress of architects, New Delhi 1990, and in particular, the theme of the congress: “Architects, Development and Environment - in an Asian Context”, gave “food for thoughts” in terms of its reality, actuality and wide scope. My contribution was based on an analysis of urban eco-development, its values and practice (Bjønness 1991 a). However, the articulation of the concept on the “Living City”, as it presented, is my own, mainly based on the Kathmandu experiences and optimism created with the introduction of a new, democratic local government system in Nepal.
place. Historical temples and monuments and a medieval city structure still persist the heavy process of change, but the situation is changing at an accelerating speed.

(ii) to ensure habitation for the original population.

The inner city of Kathmandu is still mainly inhabited by its original inhabitants, the Newars, with their strong communal traditions and feelings, and skills within arts and crafts. That they remain in the city core seems a guarantee that many of the traditional customs and practice of festival traditions, once so important in the creating of urban space, will prevail over time. At the same time other population groups in the city must not be neglected in the present-day dynamic culture. One should realize, that there is no such thing as a pure culture, and in order to meet the future, other ethnic groups and migrants should be taken into consideration as a valuable supplement. This should be included in the planning process to avoid xenophobia which, in many cities, destroys the quality of urban life. This is within a preventive approach closely tied to awareness and civic pride.

(iii) to enhance the viability and promote the requirements for economic development and work opportunities, particularly for groups below poverty line.

The Kathmandu inner city has a potential for economic development and future growth, in particular of the identity of place will remain. Conscious efforts have to be made to ensure that economic development will benefit the overall population. This is, within the small scale economy, a particular challenge.

(iv) to reinforce self-reliance through a local government system.

Experience and surveys show the sincere interest of the Kathmandu city population to maintain and upgrade its environment. This is in spite of a local government with limited functioning. However, the mandate is now clear. After local elections (May, 1992) the local representatives have become accountable to the people. And for Kathmandu, the legal framework for its function as a Metropolitan Municipality (Maha Nagar Palika) has been approved by the Parliament (Municipal Act. HMG 1992).

A well functioning, representative and cooperative local government would, together with a

Sustainability is not only assessed in economic terms. "A Sustainable city is a city where achievements in social, economic, and physical development are made to last. A Sustainable City has lasting natural resources on which its development depends and a lasting security from environmental hazards which might threaten development achievements."

The UNCHS (Habitat) 1991 further stresses the need for a comprehensive planning approach, which later in this article will be discussed as inappropriate and inacheivable in Least Developed Countries: "The planning and management for Sustainable City development requires agreements and coordinated actions of a variety of public, private, and popular sector actors at the individual, community, city, and national levels".

However, the objectives of Sustainabile City development are clear, but do not explicitly include the conservation perspective: "Sustaineable City development supports the achievement of conventional development planning and management objectives such as the following:

- economic efficiency in the use of development resources.
- social equity in the distribution of development benefits and cost (with special emphasis on the needs on low income groups)". UNCHS (Habitat), 1991.
strengthened resource base, guarantee local sustainability.

The ideas behind the conservation and development concept of the "Living City" are not new, but its contemporary, and growing acceptance and actuality in Asia, is. In Asia, where many historical city centres are under tremendous modernization pressure, mobilization of an awareness of conserving the past identity has become more important both from national and local points of view. This has become more acute as the population and commercialization pressures have increased. A conservation view is also embedded in an integral view of man and his environment, which is a fundamental part of Buddhist and Hinduist philosophy (Goonatilake 1982, 84), rather than a sectorial and efficient class society reflected in the Western City concept (Benevolo 1973). To identify the "roots" of the overall city fabric, and secure and reinforce its persistence in the habitat environments of the contemporary society, is a real challenge. It is now being advocated that surroundings or context of designated monuments should be regarded as integral parts of the historic monuments. This is being advocated by architects and planners in Asia, e.g. in India, Old Delhi (Ribeiro 1990, 91) and China, Beijing (Wu Liangyong 1990). In particular, Professor Wu's work with insight on habitation with courtyard pattern of construction, and low rise high density, close to the "Forbidden City" of Beijing, is of importance in this most populous state of the world. However, the Chinese approach can be discussed from the point of view of reconstruction rather than conservation and preservation. And there is a danger of gentrification as a result of the high cost involved with reconstruction.

The approaches, of the "Living City Concept", are not without inherent contradictions, e.g. between conservation interests in maintaining the historical city as it is, and economic development and construction activities which need to manifest itself, as well as to cater for the change of functions, e.g. for modern shopping centres, through construction activities.

It is my opinion, that economic viability should not be advocated at "any price". The international situation of inner city development abounds in examples of how commercial development can become totally dominant both over conservation and habitation interests.

The economic viability should be measured in a long-term perspective, drawing from the experiences of other nations. These experiences show us that maintaining a living city core is essential. The alternative is that it will become desolate, with all the waste and negative impacts that can follow. One must recognize the strong asset Kathmandu has in this respect: one can still steer the developments so that this will not occur. An increasing number of cities of the West are preoccupied with the dilemma of how to regain the economic small scale business and business potential, once so characteristic for the historical cities, and so important for the service and attractiveness to the inhabitants. Costly repair projects of the city fabric are under way all over Europe and America.

The inner cities of the main market economies of Asia and the West are characterized by densification of resident population and dominant commercialization by the corporate commercial sector. It is a process of corporate commercialization where the market forces totally dominate the housing interests of indigenous and marginal groups. The small firm economy, on the contrary, is much more adaptable within a conservation and housing environment. This is not always the case. We know that the agglomerated effect in Shahjahanabad, or Old Delhi, has been an expansion of the small firm
economy within the limited area available, at the cost of housing interests. The densities today in some of the traditional ‘kattras’ (courtyard houses for collective housing) is extremely high (Trivedi).

For these reasons, preserving the historic core and developing a “living city” is clearly the most sound economic long-term measure and should be prioritized equally along new business developments. In addition, in a historical city like Kathmandu, the tourist potential and income, will seriously affect if the charm and historical appearance of the city is lost.

How to make a concept, or one might call it a slogan 6, like the “Living City”, operational and implementable in a balanced and self-sustainable way? Well, this is the challenge which faces politicians, administrators and professionals and, not to forget, the inner city population themselves. The professionals, I would say, have a special responsibility in understanding the processes of change and give adequate, realistic advise on how to approach and overcome the situation of a degrading environment and cultural heritage in a place specific context. This I will turn to in the next part.

PART 2. What are the specific problems and the processes of change in the case of Kathmandu today?

The conservation and development problems of the “Living City” of Kathmandu, in face of the present day realities of the historical inner city, are complex and of large magnitude. They can be summarized as:

(i) Deterioration and a process of accelerating change and modernization of inner city areas with monuments and environments which are main parts of the historical physical heritage towards lack of identity of the people and place and loss of common open space and property.

(ii) Inability of large parts of the indigenous population and urban migrants to maintain and develop their basic needs standard in terms of housing, basic services as education and health and infrastructure, e.g. water supply.

(iii) Lack of opportunity to enhance the economic viability of the whole city including disadvantaged areas and in particular create secure work opportunities of groups below poverty line.

(iv) And finally, the problems of self-reliance faced by a new government in front of rising expectations and requirement for accountability to meet city dwellers needs.

In short, this emphasizes that the problems of urban heritage conservation must also be considered as developmental problems. An example of this is the encroachment of public land and monument sites and buildings for private use 7. This is a threat to the

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6 The Mayor of Kathmandu, Mr P.L. Singh, has as his slogan: “Clean + Green, Healthy Kathmandu City”. The cultural heritage conservation perspective is missing. However, “green” might be interpreted in terms of preserving open, public space the private gardens, and arable land within the city.

7 We first encountered this issue through the studies with the Norwegian MSc students of architecture and civil engineering (Thronsden 1989, Haugen et al., 1990; Flyen and Thore, 1990, Aresvik et al. 1991, Fuglestad and Edvardsen 1993). Later this has been a priority area for the TASK project and its mini-demonstration project (Bjønness 1991 c).

The encroachment often blocking the old network of paths and alleys also affect the circulation of pedestrians within the city center (Eich et al. 1993).
upkeeping of the quality of common property and the cultural heritage of the urban structure. This is a result of the population explosion, segregation of joint families and an uncovered housing demand, but also speculation as a result of escalating land prices and commercialization. Government intervention with land surveys of private land has also had a negative impact. It is essential, in the overcrowded inner city of Kathmandu, to secure and maintain the courtyards, or the traditional “chowks”, functioning as outdoor working areas, playgrounds and spaces for religious and family functions. The health situation of urban citizens and the low caste slum dwellers is affected by overcrowded and minimal indoor and outdoor spaces. The decreasing quality and cleanliness of the living environments affects the overall health situation (Harpham et al. 1988). The urban structure, which is an important part of the cultural heritage, is broken up when the traditionally well balanced network of open public spaces, internal passageways and private gradens is destroyed.

There is a change of mentality and values. Bista (1993) argues that Nepal’s strengths have always been in the indigenous qualities of various ethnic groups. The Newars, of the Kathmandu Valley, is definitely one of the most significant ethnic groups. But, as Bista proposes, the ethnic groups have been under the influenced of other cultures, including the Western, which have suppressed its own strengths. The lack of maintenance of the cultural heritage is a serious symptom, as it signals a decreased civic pride, less awareness of the importance of traditional values and the architectural and cultural heritage. It also tells about the inability of the traditional religious and community organizations (guthis) to maintain and secure the cultural heritage. The urban citizens face a situation with a fast deteriorating identity of place and living cultural heritage. The historical temples and monuments and a medieval city structure exist, but with the fast changing situation, and commercialization pressure, the rich fabric of temples, monuments and public places disappear. The overall build environment loses its homogenous and harmonious appearance.

Kathmandu has nearly doubled in population size from 1981 to 1991. The present day population is 414,000 against 235,160 in 1981 (CBS Census 1981, 1991). The annual growth rate is more than double of the national average. This is within the Kathmandu district boundaries. However, population density of the resident population within the Kathmandu inner city wards is also fast increasing. The population increase for the inner city wards for Kathmandu was on the average 2.4% p.a. for the

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8 "A guthi system is a traditional co-operative organization unique to the Newars. It sets up a network of social relationships of values, norms, etiquettes and social precedence based on age and generation. It is also a work organization concerning the social and religious interests of its members, and physical facilities" (Nepali 1965).

9 The need to strengthen the guthi system was early realized in the Master Plan for the Conservation of the cultural heritage in the Kathmandu Valley (Sekler, 1977). However, this has not materialized. A problem today is that, guthi sansathan, a kind of government corporation, is capitalizing through sale of the land owned by the guthis for short term benefit. The arable guthi land, through the sale of the harvest, was supposed to guarantee the implementation of religious and social functions and regular building maintenance. In the case of the private guthis there are interests in the same direction. However, ownership disputes often have a “conserving effect”. (Falleth 1993).
period 1981 to 1991. With a forecast of an increase per annum of 2.1% during the next 20 years, the population increase for the inner city wards will be approximately 50%. The inner city wards have today (CBS 1991 census) a population of 103,700 and will with the above estimated increase have a population of 156,800 in 2011. (The forecast of increase is based on the assumption of some out migration of the natural increase of the population. The forecast growth rate is less than the national average of 2.5% p.a.)

The population increase, is on the contrary to the inner cities, or Central Business Districts (CBD) of industrialized nations, but also of some historical cities of Asia, like Old Delhi, where fast expanding production and market functions push out the resident population (UNCHS (Habitat) 1984).

The average population figures do not tell the whole story. The population pressure at grassroots level of the poor and socially disadvantaged caste communities is already much higher than average and is expected to increase more than the above figures could indicate. The maximum capacity of the core area is by the Asian Development Bank calculated to 850 persons / ha (ADB 1991, 1992). E.g., in Kankeswori, a sewer and butcher caste settlement close to Vishnumati river, with extremely polluted environment and low standard of housing and basic services, the density was 1066 persons / ha (in 1989) and is expected to increase to 1790 persons / ha in 15 years (Thronsdem 1989). In Nepal, on the whole, the urban poor defined to be below the poverty line, constitute 42% of the urban population (Urban Basic Services (UBS) Programme, UNICEF (no date).

The urban poor are marginalized and low caste settlements of the historical city fringe persist. In terms of housing, increasing commercialization appears to be in most cases the predominant threat to the inner city poor, resulting in their expulsion into peri-urban squatter settlements. E.g. ground floor space traditionally occupied by low income groups and migrants have been converted to shops (Backe-Hansen et al. 1985). In the larger squatter settlements close to the urban core more than half of the population are from the city core itself (Kvamstad et al. 1985).

The building technique has changed dramatically. This does not necessarily threaten the conservation of a historical built environment. A challenge is to modernize in harmony with the scale, architectural expressions and materials of the vernacular architecture and built environment (Ozkan 1992). However, in the case of Kathmandu in particular, concrete frame structures on top of a mud mortar structure makes the building extremely vulnerable to earthquake. This is a threat not only to the people living in the building itself, but to the surroundings.

There are technical and philosophical problems associated with ongoing preservation and conservation works. The ICOMOS International Wood Committee remarked in its recommendations from the meeting in Kathmandu, November, 1992: "The ICOMOS Wood Committee were primarily

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10 Population data for the inner city of Kathmandu is not readily available, and has to be derived from many sources:


concerned with the degree of rebuilding found, the introduction of contemporary reinforcement materials, the degree to which intervention decisions reflected broad philosophical consensus and site values and the introduction of inappropriate modern design idioms in traditional milieu" (ICOMOS 1992). The report concludes with reference to Herv Stovel's (1992) remarks: "Our review of several conservation projects in progress highlighted a number of significant conservation issues. Failure to address these issues in a serious and comprehensive fashion could in the long term ultimately impair the values of the Would Heritage Sites". This is of importance, the urban fabric is not only threatened, but also the monuments and World Heritage Sites through intervention and projects, with the best intentions, but not taking the complex question of authenticity seriously (Larsen 1992).

The critical issues of planning for the city core relate to competing sets of interests and are, therefore, political ones. Planning strategies are fundamentally the result of the leverage of pressure groups, in the inner city more than elsewhere, because the interests are great and the stakes are high. It is no surprise, therefore, that the poor are the ones who mostly stand to lose from any change occurring in the inner city which result in an increasing squeeze on the residential and outdoor space accessible to them. The public cultural heritage is also under pressure of groups and individuals for privatizing their interests. In the face of this to create public awareness and strengthened community based organizations (CBOs) and non governmental organization (NGOs) is an essential challenge. With the multi-party democracy introduced spring 1990, it has become legal to form independent interest organizations. Without acceptance and community solidarity and respect for communal property and the cultural heritage, to only enforce the implementation of building and planning by-laws will not solve the problem. Planning for conservation has been aiming at comprehensive change, sectorial and not matched with available resources.

Notwithstanding the certainty of future problems, the Nepalese Government is not in a position to implement large-scale urban improvement and conservation works. Dr. S Amatya, Director General of Department of Archaeology, has written that the major problems faced by the heritage sector at first glance are related to resource constrains, both in financial terms and with regard to sufficiently qualified and experienced manpower. And he stresses: "The real magnitude of the problem lies with the severe weakness in administrative/legal coordination and participation aspects" (Amatya, 1986). Based on this important recognition, it is rather a question of structural changes, internally, and a more extrovert, enabling role, locally. This is required in addition to resource mobilization and manpower development.

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11 The normative aspects of development/conservation problems and control will not be discussed here. The total neglect of maximum height regulations on new constructions and additions is one example of an urban renewal process out of control also within the Kathmandu Durbar Square Monument Zone which is declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site. There are also by-laws which have a direct negative, not intended, impact. E.g. the rule permitting 100% ground coverage in Kathmandu facilitates the construction of what should remain as open land for light, air and ventilation, and outdoor use. Young dedicated professionals in Nepal are now taking interest in these normative aspects of conservation and development in the city cores of Kathmandu and Patan (Personal communication Mr. S. Sangachhe; Shrestha, I.B. 1989).
There is a need for responsive action grounded in working out clear divisions of responsibilities structured on the actual, and possible future, situation. An example could be the decentralization process under way, to the town municipalities, should not decrease the central government commitment to make policies which can secure action directed toward the weakest and support action which can address and improve the situation in a prompt and coordinated way.

In the process of empowering the local government, the Metropolitan Municipality (Maha Nagar Palika) of Kathmandu, meets the shortage of trained manpower with appropriate knowledge of addressing development and conservation needs. The Metropolitan Municipality of Kathmandu will in the future have increased responsibility for developing, maintaining and conserving its own historical environment, and to improve the living conditions of its people.

Several international agencies and NGOs are addressing urban developmental and conservation needs within urban planning, basic services and infrastructure provision of Kathmandu, e.g. World Bank, UNDP, Asian Development Bank (ADB), UNICEF, Norwegian Save the Children, NORAD/NTH and GTZ (German bilateral technical assistance) and KVPT (Kathmandu Valley Preservation Trust). In particular, the Patan Conservation and Development Programme (with German bilateral assistance) is doing appreciable efforts to address development and conservation issues. This project builds on a vast experience with the Bhaktapur Development Project (BDP) (Parajuli 1986). However, the coordination of these projects and activities and linking of these efforts with cultural heritage conservation is the responsibility of several ministries and departments and is generally missing. Better coordination at a municipal level would also be a challenge. The self-interest of institutions and organizations attached to the individual projects seem to prohibit both coordination and delegation of project decision making authority to the municipality.

In terms of training, the issues of urban conservation and development is through higher education, at the Tribhuvan University and Institute of Engineering, not addressed through their formal courses and continuing education courses are non existing. Based on the need for applied knowledge within the field the Department of Housing, the Institute of Engineering and the Norwegian Institute of Technology/NORAD initiated a course entitled TASK (Training in Area upgrading and Slum rehabilitation) project. This project addressed the problems in the field through area and cluster planning exercises, mini demonstration projects and gave fact information, also through exposure to similar problems in Delhi, to interdisciplinary groups of trainees (TASK 1990, Bjønness 1991 c). This is also within a “holistic” for architectural conservation education recommended in India, also addressing developmental issues (Thakur 1990, Kambo 1991).

As a concluding statement, the historical inner city is in a process of accelerating change, both from the point of view of modernization and decay, developing to meet the needs of a fast increasing population. The response in terms of central and local government, project action and training is far from sufficient. In fact, Kathmandu is facing a “time bomb” of population explosion and worsening conditions.

There are two distinct development trends in areas of the inner city with different characteristics. One part of the city is developing fast and has an economic potential. The conflict here is often between modernization of housing and undesirable new construction for commercial use, traffic and conservation of the environment of monuments and
conservation worthy secular buildings.

The other part is becoming marginalized and increasingly segregated with fast worsening conditions. A diversified intervention based on a different economic potential and willingness to participate, and project response, is a matter of urgency. The main challenges are to improve the living and housing conditions of economically weaker sections, and to avoid that a rich cultural and architectural heritage quietly disappears.

There is in short a process of change from:

(i) a situation where the surroundings of designated monuments could be regarded as an integral part together with the historic buildings to an increasing disintegration between the modernized city and the historical monuments and sites.

(ii) a diverse urban fabric with well balanced open spaces and gardens, public and private, for communal, recreational, productive and domestic use to privatization of ownership and a decreasing overall public area.

(iii) a healthy living environment to, in particular, a worsening situation with inadequate housing standard with high density for low, “unclean” and “untouchable” caste communities. There is also a process from owner occupancy to rent.

(iv) a traditional joint family structure with a well dimensioned housing stock, to fragmentation of the joint families and vertical segregation of buildings into non functional housing units also exposing the inner city to earthquake damage.

(v) a system of community based services towards worsening conditions of the provision of basic services in terms of water supply and sewerage, public educational and health services.

In responding to these processes of change and problems to be addressed, there are:

- A lack of strategy in addressing both conservation and developmental concerns of the governmental and other agencies involved.
- A lack of response to a situation of emergency and problems of cultural heritage, physical, social and economic deterioration.
- A lack of training addressing the needs of capacity building of municipal, CBO and NGO manpower.
- A lack of skilled master craftsmen to maintain the physical cultural heritage.
- There are problems of mobilization of resource, managerial skills and implementation capacity of Department of Archaeology.
- There are problems of lack of authority in policy making, interdepartmental and government coordination and decentralization.
- There is a lack of response to a new political and institutional reality, with a local government, for planning, government intervention and implementation.
- The International Safeguarding campaign for the Kathmandu Valley has failed to show accomplished results and to document an active leading role by the Department of Archaeology in conserving, maintaining and developing the World Heritage Sites. (Bjønness 1992 b. page 13-14).
- And there is a lack of monetary resources However, this is also a question of priority and management of existing resources.

In the next part, the strategy response to this reality, will be outlined.

PART 3. What are the shifts in project strategy this project addresses and the main project content?

Initially I will outline the main characteristics of the project in terms of shifts recommended in project strategy. Secondly, the project strategy response of the UNESCO / UNDP “Kathmandu Urban Heritage Conservation and Development
Project will be outlined.

(i) In general, it is recommended a shift from a uniform, general policy to a diversified and target group directed strategy for urban conservation, development and environmental upgrading depending on the local potential and benefitting the socially disadvantaged and the poor.

Secondly, it is proposed a general shift from sectorial concentration to a planning and implementation in the context of development and environment.

Third, there is a general shift from a restrictive, problem focused strategy to a mobilizing, constructive strategy based on the living city concept.

(ii) In terms of planning, the project represents a shift from long term, master planning of urban conservation and development works to operation of an integrated action planning (IAP) process leading to concrete implementation and an emergency responses with immediate repairs.

Secondly, also in terms of planning, the project aims at a shift from centralized planning and implementation to decentralization and emphasis on locally sustainable and repeatable local development and conservation efforts.

(iii) For implementation it is a shift from a contractor approach to craftsmen cooperatives.

(iv) For institutional development, it is recommended a shift from dependency on central government agencies to the Metropolitan Kathmandu Municipality to take the lead role.

Secondly, the project emphasises a shift from a singular approach working with formal organizations to a multiple approach mobilizing the wards, the neighborhoods and the local, and representative, CBO’s and NGO’s.

(v) As to the role of the state, there is a shift from normative state intervention to awareness raising.

(vi) and finally, for training, the project approach represents a shift from specialized courses to “learning - by - doing, on site”;

and a shift from formalized crafts training “back to” on - site, skill training and craftsman apprenticeship arrangements.

This is a long list. The challenge is to make operational the recommended shifts in project strategies in terms of addressing conservation in the context of development and environment. In general terms, a strategy is defined through its objectives and, not to forget, means to reach these objectives. The more delimited project strategy is based on the recognition that there are five different but inter-related tasks that have to be accomplished in order to

The project document is written based on what is called the programming approach of United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (UNDP 1992). The UNDP definition of the programming approach is “the pursuit of national development goals through articulated national programmes”. The point of departure in the project document is therefore the “host country” strategies within the cultural, urban and local government sectors. These sector strategies, as outlined by the Nepalese government (National Planning Commission 1992) for the cultural (MOEC 1992), urban and local government sectors, will not be outlined here. Rather, I am giving emphasis to the more limited strategy for project planning and implementation, institutional development, training and skill development.

The drafting of the project document was also based on a workshop with all involved parties entitled: “Integration of Cultural Heritage Conservation and Urban Development in Kathmandu” (Bjønness 1992 a).

Furthermore, the document itself is worked out after the objective oriented project planning method (Logic Framework Approach) (UNDP 1990, NORAD 1992).
meet the objective(s) or the project. This strategy puts human resources development at the centre.

The means of the project strategy response of the UNESCO / UNDP "Kathmandu Urban Heritage Conservation and Development Project" can be outlined as follows:

(i) Human resource development of manpower from the Metropolitan Municipality, the department of Archaeology, concerned line agencies and representatives from local Community Based Organizations (CBO’s) and NGO’s. The experience is that there is not a shortage of manpower with the formal qualifications within urban development and conservation. However, there is a lack of applied knowledge through concrete working experience within urban inner city situation of Kathmandu.

(ii) Working out an Integrated Action Plan for the conservation and development of selected cultural heritage areas of Kathmandu Conservation and development Zone, and for Kathmandu Durbar Square Monument Zone (The World Heritage Site), as a tool in coordinating and mobilizing conservation and developmental efforts. This also includes cultural planning efforts for tourism and the indigenous communities.

(iii) Mobilizing and organizing skill training of traditional master craftsmen assisting the Metropolitan Municipality (Maha Nagar Palika), the Department of Archaeology and the project, in an emergency response to repair and conservation requirements and in long term regularized maintenance of the physical cultural heritage,

(iv) Accomplishing conservation and restoration works at the World Cultural Heritage site of Kathmandu Durbar Square and assisting the Department of Archaeology in their work with regularized maintenance. Assist in redefining and relaunching the international Campaign for the Safeguarding of the Kathmandu Valley.

(v) Establishing and running of the project through the guidance of the project board, in relation to the Kathmandu Conservation and Development Zone (KCDZ), and delimiting the project area within KCDZ and an extended, declared Kathmandu Durbar Square Monument Zone (KDSMZ). The execution of the Project will depend heavily on local contracts. The establishing of the office and an information centre in the Hanuman Dhoka complex, located in the project area, will be of importance for the later follow up by local and central government.

The above tasks of the project are interlinked and mutually support each other. The assistance within conservation and development efforts within the inner city of Kathmandu is wide in scope, but limited in time (4 years) and will be directed towards priority areas and bottlenecks. It is expected that within that time the municipality and the community based organizations will jointly be able to organize self sustainable conservation and development activities. The intention of this assistance, according to the "Living City Concept", is to contribute to the upgrading of the habitable environment of the Historical Inner City. The historical inner city conservation and development efforts will be connected to the Kathmandu Durbar Square Conservation Programme under the Safeguarding campaign.

The project is geographically limited to the Historical Inner City of Kathmandu. The Metropolitan Municipality of Kathmandu, in collaboration with the Department of Archaeology and Department of housing and Urban Development, is recommended to take steps to establish a Kathmandu Conservation and Development Zone (KCDZ) outside the present World Heritage Area of Kathmandu Durbar Square. KCDZ will include the ancient bazaar, some of the most characteristic adjacent urban quarters with courtyard-structure. It is also recommended that there
is delimited an area which will represent a section of
the city from the palace to the low caste settlement of
Kankeswori next to the river. This would in addition
to the conservation perspective also give several
devvelopmental challenges in linking this project up
with agencies already involved in KCDZ and the
World Heritage Zone. E.g. in collaboration with
UNICEF, and its Urban Basic Services (UBS)
programme (UNICEF, no date), effort should be
made to address the development and conservation
of the low caste settlement of Kankeswori and the
significant Kankeswori temple. One other challenge
would be implementation of a traffic management
plan for non-vehicular traffic and pedestrianisation
of the inner core.

The project presentation has to be limited, here
in this article, and a detailed understanding can only
be achieved going through the detailed outputs and
related activities and budget of the project, as specified
in the project document (Bjønness 1992 b). However,
here I will the project presentation to outline the
implementation arrangements.

The project will start with the establishment of
project management and delimiting the KCDC and
KDSMZ, point 5 above: Establishing and running of
the project. The experience is that project management
should be given special attention, and even be regarded
as a project component. Much depends on smooth
and efficient guidance, management and staff
cooperation. There is also a challenge of local as well
as central government involvement through
establishment of a board for Kathmandu Conservation
and Development Zone.

The second task, point I above: Human resource
development, is “a learning -by-doing” exercise
addressing the realities of the historical inner city.
The trainees will through project work identify, plan
and implement mini demonstration projects and
mobilize the people of the area to take responsibility
for the upgrading of their own environment. In this
way the trainees and trainers jointly will work on
strategy development and make a draft integrated
action plan. The material collected by the trainees
will also be an important resource base at the actual,
neighborhood, or implementation level.

Training has a central role in project
development and implementation. If fact, through
the training exercise, the trainees will take the
responsibility to map the areas involved and draft
plans, make projects and test implementation13.

13 The activities of output (1.2): “Interdisciplinary training in historical inner - city conservation and
development with multi - agency and community representation” are in the project document outlined
as follows (Bjønness 1992 b).
(i) Implement a training needs assessment
(ii) Preparation of interdisciplinary course programme through training of trainers workshops.
(iii) Mobilization of participating institutions etc.
(iv) Course programme implementation (Part I). Theory component and site study programme.
(v) Course programme implementation (Part II) Project work. Preparation of area development
plan preparation of cluster development plan with the community.
(vi) Course programme implementation (Part III) Implementation of mini demonstration projects
as a part of the training.
(vii) Course programme implementation (Part IV) Preparation of a draft integrated action plan for
Kathmandu Conservation and Development Zone (KCDZ).
(viii) Compilation of training curriculum, and results. Evaluation of training and project work.
(ix) Presentation and publication of training material.
The third task, point 2 above: Working out an Integrated Action Plan, is Integrated Action Planning. The intention is to see how the challenges of conservation and development can be met and coordinated in a mutually supportive manner. This plan will have a strong element of learning from the implementation of conservation and development tasks in proposing areas of future action where the community in question will have a strong say. However, initially the project, and later the Department of Archaeology and its Kathmandu Durbar or municipal office, will have an advisory role on the conservation part. A main challenge is, however, to mobilize a “young” Metropolitan Municipality (Maha Nager Palika) of Kathmandu to involve itself in integrated measures in a self sustainable way.

The fourth task, point 3 above: Mobilizing and organizing skill training of traditional master craftsmen, addresses the mobilization of master craftsmen, on site surveys and in supporting their organization to be able to make an emergency response to a fast deteriorating physical cultural heritage. A core group of Newari master craftsmen from the earlier HMG/UNESCO/UNDP project for the restoration of the Kathmandu Durbar are still active and in need of work. They should be mobilized to also assist in appointing other master craftsmen in traditional crafts. With their assistance, survey and repair work should start on declared monuments within Kathmandu in need of emergency repairs. A second group will work with conservation works related to KDSMZ (the World Heritage Site). Through these activities, there should be possibilities of immediately starting apprenticeship training of young craftsmen, as a part of the ongoing activities.

And the fifth task, point 4 above: Accomplishing conservation, restoration and development works, addresses the Department of Archaeology (DOA) and its responsibilities to conserve the international and national heritage and the Department of Housing and Urban Development (DHUD). DHUD will take care of coordination with the developmental perspectives and the enforcement of building codes. DOA will be enable in its tasks with concentration on Kathmandu Durbar Square Monument Zone, and will apply an offensive strategy for resource mobilization working out concrete proposals for conservation.

In presenting the project proposal, there have been questions regarding the contents of integrated action planning (IAP). I will therefore more in detail reply to what a planning methodology of conservation, in the context of urban development and environment could be. Questions are: Has urban planning functioned in the so-called developing countries? And if planning has not functioned, which is generally the fact, is it at all likely that the ambitious aim is met integrating both conservation and developmental goals in planning and implementation efforts? And if at all talking about planning, what kind of planning is likely to function? These are large and complex questions to reply throughout. Here, I will concentrate on a reply through a presentation of the intentions and contents of integrated action planning.

The development of this planning methodology is at its beginning (UNDP/UNCHS 1989). However, it has its roots in environments dealing with “tropical planning” (Koenigsberger 1964).

The practice of integrated action planning (IAP) is not new, because it is a planning which generally is responsive to a limited resource base, and aims at directly achieving social and economic, as well as physical, development.

It is also a planning giving emphasis to the process which addresses the most urgent issues in the city’s growth. It is therefore an urban developmental planning with demands on
peoples participation. The formulation of means and ends and the mobilization of resources shall be an open process which allows for the beneficiaries involvement. Interaction between the planning team and decision makers at different levels becomes essential. IAP calls for an iterative formulation of analysis and advice with which to feed a continuous process of political decision making. This kind of planning does not neglect the normative and institutional aspects of planning.

There is a concern to advice how government regulations can be effectively implemented, and how the allocation of public resources will affect the problems tackled by the government and will affect the conditions the government wishes to maintain. IAP recognizes that the current apparatus of the government has its limitations. It would attempt to change the institutional capacity of government to act. When politics are expressed as strategies and then broken into discrete tasks, the performance of these tasks cannot be expected unless each can be matched to an entity capable of taking the necessary actions. This is what is called "role casting". In theory, an institution's capability is a combination of particular skills, finances, legal powers, and relationships with other actors. If role casting is done at all; it is rarely possible to mate necessary tasks with capable, committed institutions. Finally it comes to the way goods and services are delivered, also by government institutions, which can be as important as their actual delivery. To this end, institutions can be given greater capacities to act as participants in a team, rather than as individualized. They can be inspired with purposes which are beyond their normal operational and maintenance objectives. This may reduce their natural inclinations to resist change and protect their self-interest to an extreme. These are important factors in Nepal, where the bureaucracy use their vested interests. It is also a culture where fatalism is closely linked to development, religion and personal interrelations (Bista 1991).

To facilitate these changes in strategies, in a traditional society normally resistant to innovation and change, the introduction and transition planning practice through a training exercise has proved successful (Mattingly 1988). In Nepal the experiences with the TASK project, earlier given reference to are relevant and recently assessed (Standley 1993).

However, the major step towards a more responsive and result oriented planning came with the introduction of multi party democracy (in April 1990) and the subsequent local elections paving the way for a functioning local government structure (May 1992).

This outline of the strategy proposed has emphasized the changes proposed and their strategy results. In addition to this the project contain, a more traditional part, with the objective to upgrade the Department of Archaeology institutionally mainly through work with conservation and development of Kathmandu Durbar Square monument zone (KDMSMZ), which is on the UNESCO World Heritage List of Cultural and Historic Sites. The second objective is to relaunch the International Campaign for the safeguarding of the Kathmandu Valley.

The support of the project to the International Camping for Safeguarding of the Kathmandu Valley is limited in scope to one priority site, where the project can only contribute with repairs to be
implemented during the project period. The prescriptive approach, and stepwise process, as foreseen by the International Campaigns for the Safeguarding of Mankind’s Cultural Heritage (Noguchi 1988), has not given the expected results in Nepal. Being sites of international and national importance, it is still expected that the department of Archaeology will take the long term responsibility for the regular and systematic maintenance of the World Heritage Site of Kathmandu Durbar Square Monument Zone (KDSMZ) possibly with the mobilization of other donors. Also, here is a difficult task ahead. Changes in the built environment and the urban structure in the areas within the World Heritage Site is also, at present, out of control.

PART 4. CONCLUSION

In Nepal, and in Asia today, what are the project challenges for the actual implementation of a project integrating the needs of conservation and development? What could be the influence of an increased international importance to culture in the context of development?

What are the project challenges and implications of aiming at integration of conservation and developmental measures within urban cultural heritage? First of all, as I see it, this implies integration of the indigenous population in the area of cultural heritage conservation into the conservation and development process of the area. This further results in an emphasis on mobilizing “peoples civic pride” and responsibilities for the cultural heritage and their own city environment. Peoples own organizations, traditional and modern, become essential in this process. Much depends on change of attitudes of resourceful people and groups obtaining the view that conserving and developing the built environment is productive for the economic development as well as for the improvement of quality of the overall living environment.

It also addresses the methodology of intervention being mainly directed towards immediate needs and within available resources. Integrated Action Planning (IAP) is introduced as a planning tool based on these principles. The comprehensive, master planning, being mere “wishful thinking”, have led to disillusionment rather than being a guiding tool and serving resource mobilization within an overall framework as defined from above by the national government.

The project outlined here has ambitious goals and means. The main tool to develop appropriate knowledge and what is called integrated action plans is a comprehensive training exercise. Secondly, confidence building of all parties involved shall develop through concrete implementation of conservation and development activities “in the field”. If this is done through the peoples own organizations, it will be the best mean to develop confidence and self-sustainable development processes. This is not easy. In the long term, to develop “civic sense” among the public is a demanding maturing process. However, in today’s context of democratic development in Nepal this is essential for a “generative” urban development. Neglect of the cultural heritage and selfishness are destructive and will lead to, what can be called, “parasitic” urban development. This will in turn lead to an overall negative impact and decreased quality of urban life and the “living city” will deteriorate. There are strong forces in Nepal realizing this. Hopefully, they can join efforts and reverse the negative development trend and the cultural heritage literally “falling apart”.

Finance of cultural heritage projects is the main bottleneck for project implementation. From the side of national authorities, and the National Planning Commission, cultural development needs are not regarded as “developmental” and are “losing” in front of, e.g. hydro power development. In the case
of Nepal, within the 8th Five Year Development Plan, there is a strong rural basis. This is another reason for direction of limited United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) resources to rural areas and hesitancy to involve is urban development and conservation. However, working towards the role of cities as “generative”, being centres of creativity, culture and economic activity and growth catering for the city and its “upland” the dealing with the urban heritage and the development of the city centres must not be left with lowest priority in government budgets. In Nepal, with a new and accountable, local government structure, there is hope for pressure “from below”

The hope is also that UNDP and other leading multilateral and bilateral development finance and technical assistance institutions, shall regard urban cultural heritage conservation not as a sector independent of urban developmental efforts. An integrated approach, to conservation and development, will respect the historical integrity of people also of a Least Developed Country (LDC) like Nepal. To sustain the cultural, historical heritage within developmental efforts is essential working towards a World with less inequality, and with mutual respect.

The constitution of the World Committee on Culture and Development is a welcome sign from UNESCO and the international community in this direction. The issues of environment and development have been debated in the report of the UN World Commission on Environment and Development (the Brundtland report, World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987) UNESCO is currently setting up a World Commission on Culture and Development (UNESCO 1992a). The discussions have initially been related to:

The cultural dimension in development. Development is per definition wanted development.

If something goes wrong, “culture” is often to be blamed.

*The culture sector:* Has culture to be treated as a separate sector in order to be complete with other sectorial needs?

*The growth potential* inherent in the cultural dimension.

*The giving of importance* to the cultural dimension. What can the cultural dimension mean for sincerity and “solidity” in handling of the ecological crisis?

(Discussion with Ms Ingrid Eide, Paris 30th of October, 1992).

The World Commission for Culture and Development should also address the importance of *the physical cultural heritage.* There are already efforts to coordinate the efforts to address cultural heritage and environment through the “World Cultural and Natural Heritage Conventions” through UNESCO. This also relate to ICOMOS. UNESCO has commented that: “It is up to ICOMOS to decide whether either of the two charters needs to be revised, for example to take account, in the case of the Venice Charter (Venice Charter 1990), of new problems arising from the use of new materials and of divergent approaches to the restoration of ancient monuments” (UNESCO 1992 b).

What I would like to emphasize is that the cultural dimension in the work of the World Commission calls for due *regional representation* to take up the regional and in some cases significant local variations, traditions and practice. This is, in relation to the Venice charter, a special challenge for our group of professionals also within urban heritage conservation and development.
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