

The UNESCO Management Plan for Urban Heritage Sites: A Critical Review of Olinda and Porto, in Brazil and Portugal

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Abstract : The expanding concept of Heritage and the increased relevance of how heritage places relate to their surroundings is associated with an important shift in public heritage policies and how they consider the development of cities and communities, with an increasingly relevant role of management. Within the current discussions, management plans, mandatory since the year 2005 in areas classified by UNESCO as World Heritage, it is a tool for the reconciliation of cultural heritage demands with the needs of multiple users of a certain area, being especially critical in the case of urban areas with intense touristic pressure. Considering the transformations of the heritage policy management model, this paper discusses the practices on the integration of cultural heritage in urban policies through indicators which were selected from resource manual 'Managing Cultural World Heritage (2013)' and analyzed two case studies: The Management Plan of the Historic Centre of Porto (Portugal) and The Management Plan for the Historic Site of Olinda (Brazil). The empirical evidence concluded that for the historic centre of Porto the increase of tourism is the main aim driver in the management plan, with positive and negative aspects on the heritage management point of view, unlike Olinda, where the plan for the development of local urban policies was identified as essential. Plans also differ in form, content and process but coincide on being unaligned with committed local political leaders' agendas, with the consequent misunderstandings between theory and practice, planning and management, and critically missing in the field integration of urban policies. Therefore, more debate about management plans, more efficient tools and also, appropriate methodologies to correlate cultural heritage and urban public policy are still lacking.

Keywords : world heritage, management plan, planning, urban policies

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