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The Present of the Past - Preservation and Revival of Markets

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Throughout history, markets were the essence of urbanism serving as consumption meeting points both in cities and in rural areas. Within the UNESCO list of world heritage sites, there are 23 markets and bazars, inscribed either as self-standing sites or as part of a larger heritage site. All of them were preserved and/or revived. Hundreds of other preserved markets are spread around the world becoming part of the local or the global growing tourism industry. This study examines the present of past markets investigating the web of motives for their preservation and revival investments. The study is important for the future design of preservation policy and guidelines for many more world-wide deserted or deteriorated markets. We first suggest two typologies: markets typology and preservation/revival typology. Then a model of expected benefits from the preservation/revival investments is presented. Two groups of markets are used to examine the motives and the implications of the various investment motives. The first includes the 23 UNESCO inscribed market sites and the second is a world-wide sample of 23 other preserved/revived markets. Comparative analyses were used to find the correlation between markets typology and preservation/revival motives. Consequently, we have found that a pre-condition for defining a preservation/revival policy for a given market, is to find first its point of losing authenticity and sense of place. These will also dictate later its physical and activity-related investments.

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