

This means that change has to be recognized as an inevitable phenomenon and the purpose of such heritage is not to be frozen in time and space but to have a function in the lives of communities. Indeed, communities do not compartmentalize heritage as tangible/intangible or movable/immovable and it is in this context that the ‘living heritage approach’ hopes to integrate the perceived dichotomies by relating everything to community.

Continuity of care

Core communities have been conscious of the continuity of their heritage and guaranteed the long-term care (within their own definitions) and management with traditional or established means. For this purpose, they possess knowledge systems for maintenance, interventions, extensions and renewal of buildings and their overall management. For instance, Pali literary sources reveal many types of terminology to suit different interventions: *patisankharam* – restoration; *puna karayi* – renovation of a section to its original form; *navakamma* – replaced anew; *pinnasankari* and *navamkamankaryi* – replacing sections that have been decayed; *parkathika* - replacement of unit as it was previously.

Some of these traditional management systems are well recorded while others are still in oral forms. An Indian treatise on architecture, *Mayamatha*,⁷ dating from the sixth century CE devotes an entire chapter to the restoration of monuments. A ninth century CE inscription from Sri Lanka (Wijesuriya, 2005) outlines that,

[There shall be] clever stonecutters and skillful carpenters in the village devoted to the work of [temple] renewal [...]. They all [...] shall be experts in their [respective] work [...] the officer who superintends work [...] his respective duties, shall be recorded in the register [...]. The limit [of time] for the completion of work is two months and five days. Blame [shall be attributed to] [...] who do not perform it according to arrangement.

In addition to the knowledge systems for care, there are traditions, skills, techniques and materials that continue to be used and are utilized even today. Until recently, all these were disregarded by the heritage sector as a result of the tenets of the modern conservation movement. They could still be used if adequate attention was paid. Some of these are relevant not only as knowledge systems but can also contribute to people’s livelihoods.

Characterizing living heritage

With the above understanding we can now try to characterize living heritage as heritage characterized by the continuity of the original function or the purpose for which it was originally established. Such heritage maintains the continuity of community connections, which continues to evolve in the form of tangible and intangible