

A postcolonial questioning of heritage issues

N-AERUS

XI

URBAN KNOWLEDGE
in
CITIES OF THE SOUTH

Hilde Heynen

OSA, ASRO, KULeuven, Hilde.Heynen@asro.kuleuven.be

This paper would build upon contributions to the forthcoming *Handbook of Architectural Theory*, which question how 'heritage' is conceived of in postcolonial situations. The matter of who decides what is worthwhile to preserve and how this preservation will be materialized is not an indifferent one. Michael Herzfeld (1991) already indicated how the cultures of, on the one hand, preservation experts and, on the other hand, of the inhabitants of a Cretan town clashed in their understandings of what was vital about the cultural heritage of the town. Such clashes continue to emerge, as for example in India, in Iran or in Afghanistan. The paper will interrogate the theoretical underpinnings of the concept of heritage, and highlight how postcolonial perspectives contribute to clarifying the impact of power relations upon decisions regarding heritage.