

FORTIFIED HERITAGE, HISTORICAL RULE OF URBAN PROCESS URBAINE

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Abstract

By nature, fortifications take advantage of the setting that they defend. In this way, they have also helped to contain urban development within their fortified walls.

“Considering fortified heritage, China does of course invite us to keep in perspective the Great Wall, its preservation and enhancement”.

Before heritage notions, around fortified towns the military engineers imposed the rule of their glacis and of their non aedificandi zones.

If the demolitions of the walls in the XXth century have released urban pressure, the protections of the fortifications as Historical Monument have rapidly taken control again of urban development. This protective and incentive double game makes it possible today to give a future new to our urban landscapes and their surroundings through heritage.

Fortified heritage has thus become a historical rule of urban process.

Aware of this stake, fifty fortified towns from North-West Europe have gathered to set up a common action project called Septentrion, within the context of European and worldwide heritage. This initiative aims at taking advantage of these landscapes, built and carved by fortifications, in order to make them become a rule and a driving force of urban process. We will present this initiative which is one of the pioneering models of European heritage about towns and their landscapes, within a geographical and historical area covering three countries.

We will thus prove that the protection of Historical Monuments has become a real modern regulation tool of the harmonious development of our towns.