Between Modern and Traditional: Comparative Urban Study of Paris and Chinese Cities

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This is a comparative cultural project that examines the evolvement of Paris into the capital of the modern world in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, especially the city's treatment of its historic heritage in light of modernization: museums, monuments, and vernacular districts. It will use Paris as a cultural paradigm to examine the struggle between the modern and the traditional experienced by Asian cities--particularly Chinese ones--in the last few decades, which resembles a lot of historical patterns that shaped the development of Paris. This project will explore France's preservation of its cultural past in official institutions such as museums and national monuments, in addition to the "unofficial" locations of history, such as streets, markets, and scenes of everyday life. It will both seek to answer the perennial question of the place of the past in modern cities and offer some practical suggestions to policymakers shaping today's urban environments in China.