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Chapter 5

Urban conservation and regeneration

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INTRODUCTION

Historic buildings, urban quarters and even small remnants of past layers all contribute to the character, identity and diversity of the urban environment. The value of historic quarters as one of the defining elements of a city's identity now enjoys global recognition (Bandarin and van Oers 2012). The walkability, mixed use and low-rise high density characteristics, particularly of pre-industrial quarters, are part of the attraction that see them variously re-imagined as centres for creativity, as tourism magnets and more recently as templates for sustainable living. An historic quarter or urban area can be any number of things to include tight knit town centres with medieval or earlier origins, former villages now absorbed into urban conurbations, colonial settlements and planned neighbourhoods of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and former industrial clusters and waterfronts. Most importantly, they are integral components of a greater urban whole, markers of a city's identity and lived-in places of community networks and economic activity.

The fundamental shift from monument preservation to area-based conservation practices is based on the recognition of group value, whereby the collective whole achieves a higher value than each individual component (Pickard 1996). These components including layout, buildings, open spaces, landscape elements and how they interact with one another, and their static and temporal relationships combine to define the character and townscape values of a place (Rodwell 2007).

Urban conservation is more complex than monument conservation as it is a 'political, economic and social concern' (Orbaşlı 2000a: 17); and as conservation theory shifts towards a more values-based approach, urban conservation and regeneration practices are also expanding to recognise the role of intangible values and meanings places hold beyond the attributes of the physical fabric.

Regeneration practice today recognises the collective value of settlements as holistic and integrated systems that are characterised not only by their architecture, settlement morphology and setting, but also by the complex dynamic of intangible and communal values that shape them.

Nonetheless, the ways in which historic urban areas are valued and exploited varies greatly. Although urban conservation and regeneration has become a recognised discipline and component of the conservation movement, the protection and management of historic urban environments remains highly contested and continuously exposed to new challenges. Rapid levels of urban growth that are now experienced in some parts of the world, implications of de-industrialisation, and in some cases urban shrinkage, all impact on how the historic environment is protected and regenerated.

Urban conservation and regeneration practices are shaped by locational specificities, political agendas and drivers of regeneration, alongside any number of external factors that fall beyond the remit of local decision makers. The drivers and the outcomes of regeneration are discussed in this chapter. The first part starts with some definitions before setting the context by briefly considering the emergence of the urban conservation movement and how it has broadened its remit up to the political and economic context of the present day. The second part of the chapter examines a range of scenarios that have emerged as common narratives and experiences of urban conservation and regeneration. The chapter concludes with a review of the factors that influence successful urban conservation and regeneration practices that maintain the tangible and intangible character of an area whilst delivering social and economic benefits locally.

THE CONTEXT OF URBAN CONSERVATION

What's in a name?

The urban conservation lexicon is extensive and also dependent on how an historic area is labelled (e.g. neighbourhood, quarter, centre, urban village) and includes terms such as regeneration, renewal, revitalisation or even urban Renaissance. Within a broader context, urban regeneration is defined as

a comprehensive and integrated vision and action which leads to the resolution of urban problems and which seeks to bring about a lasting improvement in the economic, physical, social and environmental condition of an area that has been subject to change.

(Roberts 2000: 17)

Other commonly used terms linked to regeneration include neighbourhood renewal or urban rehabilitation, whilst 'urban conservation' often indicates actions within an historically or architecturally significant area. Richards (1994: 99) for example describes urban conservation as 'a process involving, first an appreciation, and then the creative protection of the particular parts of the built environment that have special architectural and historic significance'. In more recent years

labels such as heritage-led regeneration or conservation-led regeneration have been used in reference to historic areas that may not have previously fitted into the more 'cosy' image of urban conservation. Other terms such as 'sanitation' implies the making of a healthier environment whilst urban Renaissance indicates a sense of grand renewal or rebirth or at least aspirations for such change (see for example Urban Task Force 2000). The Historic Urban Landscapes approach (HUL), launched in 2009, is emerging as a new paradigm for urban conservation that recognises the dynamic and changing nature of the urban environment, its tangible and intangible values and the connectivity of historic areas to the greater whole of a city (Bandarin and van Oers 2012).

For the purposes of this chapter, urban conservation will refer to the collective interventions aimed at delivering economic, social and environmental improvements to urban areas of historic, architectural and cultural significance. Historic will refer to the age of buildings, the settlement pattern (morphology) and layers that also contribute to the character of an area; architectural will refer to the multiple styles and types of architecture and the established relationship between the built environment and open spaces; cultural will be a reference to the cultures that established a place, those that have contributed to its development over time as well as the cultural traditions that continue to shape it in the present day; intangible values will refer to the social systems embedded in a place, local meanings and traditions defined by and enacted in the place.

The character of a place is the totality of physical attributes determined by its history and development, topography, morphology including plot sizes and architectural characterisation; coupled with its prevalent social networks and governance mechanisms. Some features remain embedded in the fabric of the city, maybe as a palimpsest or distant memory, such as an ancient city plan or road network that has survived through centuries of occupation. And even while the social make-up of a place appears to be continuously changing, that too can be embedded in the social character of a place spanning generations. Recognising the 'spirit of place' as a more 'dynamic and inclusive' approach to cultural heritage supports its safeguarding and ongoing transmission (ICOMOS 2008).

Heritage or the historic environment, once recognised for having a value that is worth preserving, can be turned into an asset or catalyst that makes regeneration or urban conservation possible. The reasons for preserving and conserving an historic urban place can range from the area retaining its value as a living environment for a community; its historic value and character being recognised as

part of a city or town's inherent identity, or the recognition of its value for potential developments that have income generating potential, including tourism and leisure uses.

The urban conservation movement: a brief history

The programmed approach to revitalising urban environments emerges out of two parallel concerns which originate in the nineteenth century: the first the welfare of urban citizens and the second the protection of the historic fabric. The industrialisation processes that were the first trigger for urban growth starting from the late eighteenth century, also gave rise to urban degradation on a scale not previously experienced. European Enlightenment theories on the rights of citizens to healthy environments also influenced early urban regeneration attempts that included slum clearance, improved housing provision and infrastructure development (Leary and McCarthy 2013).

By the middle of the twentieth century the notion of context in the protection of monuments gained momentum and started to become formalised in Europe, especially following the Second World War. The decisions to rebuild entire urban quarters destroyed by bombing were closely linked to the realisation that they could also represent social and political identity (Jokilehto 1999). By the 1960s, however, urban renewal projects influenced by modernist ideals had a significant impact on the spatial organisation of the city and also presented a new threat to historic urban areas. A significant number of historic neighbourhoods across Europe were demolished and cleared in the name of sanitisation or renewal. This in turn started to spark community-led protests against the destruction, highlighting the strong links communities have to places. Consequently, urban conservation emerged out of both elite antiquarian interests and bottom-up community activism.

The seminal Venice Charter of 1964 was the first in a series of international charters to articulate historic context and group value, subsequently paving the way for area-based conservation policies and the designation of conservation areas (Larkham 1996). Beyond policy, the very limited interest in these areas in the 1960s was switching to high demand by the 1970s once renewal programmes started to highlight their attractiveness (Harrison 1990). The 1975 Council of Europe initiative, the European Heritage Year, helped the movement gain momentum by creating a platform to celebrate and promote Europe's many and diverse historic towns and quarters.

Donald Appleyard, in *The Conservation of European Cities*, published in 1979, aptly summarised the situation in many of Europe's historic neighbourhoods highlighting the prominence of poorly maintained buildings, lack of services and infrastructure. He also focused attention on their

inhabitants, many of them 'working class', with a strong sense of place attachment and established social networks in their neighbourhoods (Appleyard 1979). A number of the case studies included in the book document emergent trends of gentrification and growing tourism interest in historic towns. These cases foreshadow the common characteristics that have now come to define the pattern of urban conservation experienced across Europe and elsewhere.

Meanwhile in the US, the urban geographer Jane Jacobs and architects like Christopher Alexander, Denise Scott-Brown and Robert Venturi were looking at the historic components of cities in new ways (Ghirardo 1996). Jacobs in particular identified the fabric of existing neighbourhoods as a human ecosystem of organised complexity that was both highly efficient and economically robust (Page 2011). At the same time the Aga Khan Trust for Culture, through its academic base in Boston, was beginning to draw attention to the plight of historic urban cores in Islamic cities around the world (AKTC 1990). The Trust was also an early supporter of significant renewal projects that placed local communities at the heart of regeneration, including in the historic medinas of Fez and Tunis (Orbaşlı 2018), and continues to deliver community-centred projects (Jodidio 2011) (Figure 5.1).

[INSERT FIGURE 5.1 HERE]

The financing of urban conservation was always going to be problematic. Individuals owning or renting properties in run down areas rarely had funds to meet repair bills. As urban conservation started to be legislated through area based protection, it also started to attract small amounts of financing. While this was often limited to external realm improvements or beautification, programmes aimed at 'rehabilitation' could attract higher levels of government funding (Larkham 1996). However, most forms of financing, whatever their source, have more often than not led to an influx of newcomers and new urban actors into these areas. In the UK, for example, as illustrated in the chapter by Carpenter in this volume, economic cycles and political objectives have shaped the focus of regeneration as it has oscillated between real estate led regeneration and more community, partnerships and sustainability focused practices (Colantonio and Dixon 2011).

A number of analogies describe cities as ecologies (Verebes 2014), shaped by human interactions and the decision-making structures that dictate day-to-day governance. While the city may represent a totality, each neighbourhood is also a contained ecology within itself (Narayan 2016). The social value residents placed in an area and the value they ultimately contributed to the

character of the area became recognised as the social component of urban conservation. Jane Jacobs (1961) referred to long-time residents as being the 'social capital' of a place.

Maintaining the social fabric has also proven to be one of the most fickle components of urban conservation, whereby the processes of physical intervention have directly and indirectly instigated social change and movement. Displacement, especially of tenants, and of owners capitalising on property price gains, gentrification and most recently accelerated cycles of gentrification have all led to rapid social change in historic neighbourhoods. These to an extent have been driven by economic factors (market economy) but also by policy approaches including the desire to create a defined character area within the city. Instead of improving the well-being of the local communities, in practice, urban conservation has invariably speeded up the process of social change.

In a reversal of the suburban exodus in the post-industrial era, inner city neighbourhoods and the facilities they offer now render them attractive to young professionals. Centrally located areas reduce travel distances between workplace, home and childcare provision, and can also provide easy access to potential clients and networks to the self-employed (Rose 2010). Shifting demographic trends including people starting families later and a growth in single person households have also increased the attractiveness of residential use in central and well connected areas with a good neighbourhood vibe. These neighbourhoods are often small and compact enough to aid connectivity and foster pedestrian activity, but also large enough to contain a good range of facilities. A mixed demographic and economic profile can engender symbiotic relationships (Zukin 2010), whilst the range of shop or unit sizes can encourage different types and sizes of businesses to operate in close proximity. All of these factors also represent a sustainable form of urban living (Tallon 2013).

Nonetheless, compact layouts and narrow streets can exacerbate traffic congestion and lack of adequate parking spaces, whilst mixed tenure and ownership issues and the age of the building stock can make properties difficult to manage and costly to maintain. Transportation and maintaining transportation networks that are linked into city-wide systems can become a challenge, and for many European cities, traffic management, integrated transport systems and parking solutions became a major concern of urban conservation in the latter part of the last century (Orbaşlı and Shaw 2004) (Figure 5.2). More recently, the erosion and total loss of public sector funds for support with maintenance and larger scale rehabilitation projects has shifted a greater

dependence on private sector finances and has hastened gentrification in many areas (see chapter by Carpenter in this volume).

[INSERT FIGURE 5.2 HERE]

Despite growing interest in visiting, living in and investing in historic areas, the pressures of rapid urban growth and development continue to impact on their survival. The belief that the old city is no longer fit for purpose and must be replaced continues to uphold the ideals that are shaping the new urban landscapes emerging in China and elsewhere (Madanipour 2017: 43). Meanwhile a growing popularity for World Heritage Site designation, is freezing some urban places as historic relics while modern developments of vastly different scales grow around them. These emergent trends are discussed in more detail below.

Urban conservation in the planning context

As it has become accepted that urban heritage is a type of heritage, urban conservation in the second half of the twentieth century has emerged as a discipline in its own right. As such, it combines theory and practice with internationally accepted principles but also recognises that urban areas cannot be treated as monuments (Bandarin and van Oers 2012). Consequently, urban conservation has become an integral part of planning and local development processes.

The first chapter of this volume by Orbaşlı and Vellinga positions architecture and regeneration as processes rather than products. While the funding and management structures for regeneration projects may be time-bound, the processes of change they instigate will have longer time horizons. Furthermore, in parallel to the rapid pace of technological developments, cities are also evolving and changing at a rapid speed (Zeiderman *et al.* 2017). Unpredicted events, from sudden surges in popularity and internal or external shifts of economic activity can impact on cities and on how places within them are used and perceived. Urban conservation is therefore a long and cyclical process.

The conservation-led management of historic areas has invariably depended on the clearly defined boundaries of designation for which framework planning policies and regulations are introduced. The role of a local planning authority is invariably a reactive one responding to and making decisions on applications for change and development submitted by building or land owners. Most development in an historic area is a piecemeal approach with a balance of risk taking by both sides. Subsequently a broader vision and aspiration for the area rarely emerges as long as the focus

remains on process management rather than on innovation. The boundaries, that by clearly defining and delineating an area had played an important role in protecting the special (historic) character of the area, have over time also acted as barriers by isolating these areas from city-wide developments (Bell and Jayne 2004).

Larkham (1996) has argued that conservation and protection are an outcome of capitalism (where one group exploits another for gain) rather than the greater 'societal good' they are often claimed to be. Unlike monument protection which is most often controlled, if not managed, at national level, area-based conservation is more likely to be embedded in local planning policy and therefore managed at local level. This imbues the process with local politics, political and financial end games, especially as the decision makers are much more likely to be closely linked to the owners or developers. The role of politics in urban governance can be multiple. Examining three case studies, Zhang (2013) observes how the protection and development of historic areas in Beijing, China is a political statement linked to the beautification and promotion of the city; in Chicago in the US it is linked to increasing property values and gentrification; and in Paris, France it is played out as a power struggle between national and municipal authorities.

Unlike in the case of monument conservation, an urban entity has less easily defined components and boundaries. More importantly it will include a multitude of owners and ownership arrangements and tenancies, and will be home to a diverse group of people, long and short term residents, others who are transient, businesses and investors, workers and those who visit for social or leisure purposes. Each individual will attach their own meanings to the area, and equally feel welcomed or marginalised by change. Sometimes regeneration is accidental and unplanned and emerges from small scale interventions, changes in fashion or economic necessity. Much depends on the key players and the nature and dynamic of their relationship, decision making mechanisms and in particular investment models adopted. Collectively they shape the processes and narratives of urban change.

The following sections discuss in more detail some of the common narratives of urban conservation and regeneration. Although discussed under separate headings, many of these processes and outcomes overlap or run concurrent courses.

URBAN CONSERVATION IN PRACTICE

Hip Neighbourhoods and Gentrification

Historic urban areas are invariably residential neighbourhoods varying including places of worship, shops, workplaces and light industry. Residential use is not only by far the greatest use, it is also the residents that are the source of life and dynamic that characterise their neighbourhood. People value living in a neighbourhood because they have some connection to it, including networks of like-minded people (Jacobs 1961). Affordability and access to economic activity also plays a significant role in place attachment, as do feelings such as safety, social capital and cohesion, often described as quality of life indicators. Despite the multitude of new uses and economic activity that are the outcomes of regeneration, social networks are often the most disrupted.

Whilst the social capital and character of a place is so often held up to be one of the aspects that defines character and makes a place attractive, displacement is one of the regularly reported outcomes of conservation and regeneration processes. The term first coined in the 1960s, gentrification, or upward social mobility of a neighbourhood, has come to be seen as the darker side of regeneration (Appleyard 1979). Sharon Zukin, amongst others, has written extensively on the gentrification of neighbourhoods as their architecture, character, affordability and often social 'atmosphere' makes them attractive to incomers of a different social group (Zukin 1982; 2010). Like urban conservation, gentrification is place specific and there are various dynamics that will determine the process and the outcome. There are several recognisable patterns of gentrification: from gradual and accidental beginnings to intentional, planned and at times rapid and aggressive approaches that are now commonly referred to variably as super-gentrification or hyper-gentrification (Lees 2003; Maharawal 2014). Another author describes the impact of re-purposing a railway line as a new elevated park, the High Line in New York, as having 'turbocharged' the gentrification of the neighbourhood (Nevins 2019) (Figure 5.3).

The early arrival newcomers into a neighbourhood are seen as the pioneers, or the risk takers. It is often artists, creative groups or the intellectual elite, who seek out affordable property on the one hand and an authentic character or vibe on the other. Run down neighbourhoods on the periphery of central areas, historic buildings in need of restoration, or the presence of an ethnic culture are all factors that make areas attractive to these so called 'pioneers'. Incomers inevitably start making their own mark on a neighbourhood by attracting other like-minded individuals to join them and soon after new businesses to cater for the new arrivals (Figure 5.4). It is often these first wave of cafes, bars or creative enterprises that attract others to visit and hang out in the area and eventually to seek properties there. The gentrification cycle is often one of several waves of incomers, the most

recent wave slowly displacing the previous incumbents, as people seek out cheaper areas because they are priced out of their own neighbourhoods (Lloyd 2010). Middle class residents are attracted to these neighbourhoods for their cultural and lifestyle appeal and relatively affordable property prices. It is, however, these same middle class incomers that destroy the very thing that attracted them to the area (Zukin 2010). Each group of incomer is seeking an authentic place in the city, yet commercial and market pressures diminish that very authenticity in the cycle of urban change, which is also an inherent quality and dynamic of a city. Similar patterns are now also observed in some Asian and Latin American cities, where intellectual classes are discovering older neighbourhoods as desirable places to live.

[INSERT FIGURE 5.3 AND 5.4 HERE]

In the more pronounced or later phases of gentrification as property prices start to rise in an area, a directed and often developer-led approach involving property speculation takes hold. While in a small number of cases a single stage speculation-led and often deliberate gentrification can occur, in most cases the process has been more incremental with complex variables at play (Rose 2010). The gradual move from local stores, neighbourhood bars and grocers, to specialist cafés and artisan bakeries and later to chains such as Starbucks, is also a demonstration of cultural power as new tastes replace old ones. In more profound examples, luxury brands also make their appearance (Zukin 2010) (Figure 5.5). This has been the experience of Barcelona in Spain where residential and commercial districts that only several decades ago showcased local Catalan design talent have been largely replaced by high-end generic international brands. Where regeneration is simply for economic purposes, a form of gentrification emerges that could result in cities losing the very characteristics that gave them meaning and made them attractive. Once upheld as a model for equitable approaches to urban regeneration and urban place making (Garcia and Claver 2003; Marshall 2004), Barcelona locals are pushing back against residential and commercial displacement that is being largely blamed on the uncontrolled growth of the tourism industry.

[INSERT FIGURE 5.5 COVENT GARDEN HERE]

Change is inevitable and part of the natural cycle of cities, and many older neighbourhoods will have experienced several cycles of decline and revitalisation in the past too. Residents around a city seeking affordable places to live, through which most gentrification is triggered, is only natural. Older neighbourhoods have in particular benefitted emergent demographic groups such as single

adult households who value being in central locations closer to jobs and services. In many instances a cycle of dilapidation has been reversed, including triggering the re-use of empty buildings. In the 1980s in cities like New York and London, entire areas of underused warehouses and industrial buildings were transformed into trend setting residential districts. Their success spurred many others to follow suit as loft living or live-work spaces became popularised for a new urban class.

These 'hip' neighbourhoods often emerge as centres of creativity through the association of the arts or music scene that is created by the first wave of incomers. However, once this process becomes predominated by investor-led development then the creative side of the city becomes merely what marketing professionals brand it to be. As the city with its inherent conflicts, histories and exchanges is lost, so is the authenticity of a place (Zukin 2010). As they are redeveloped and up-scaled both neighbourhoods and public spaces become homogenised and lose their distinct identity (Zukin 2010: xi). There is thus a perceived territorial battle between the corporate city and the mixed-use and mixed-tenure urban village that Jane Jacobs fought for (Page 2011). Furthermore, in the post-Fordist economy public space has also become one that can be managed and controlled (Ghirardo 1996), and it is increasingly the case in large scale urban regeneration projects that the public realm is carefully curated and privately managed. In the 2010s developer-led regeneration projects of sizeable urban districts from New York to Shanghai are both creating, curating and vigilantly managing faux 'creative' spaces.

Historic places as tourism destinations

One of the most influential drivers of heritage conservation in historic settlements has been tourism. Numerous historic towns and settlements across the world have been saved from development in anticipation of the economic advantages tourism interest can bring. The rapid technological advances that have brought about profound changes to the urban environment have also generated a nostalgic yearning for past urban forms and a way of life they signify (Marshall 2001). For visitors, historic towns offer a refuge from the modern city, a step 'back in time' and a human scale environment with aesthetic appeal (Orbaşlı 2000a). The growth of historic areas and places as tourism destinations also coincides with a shift towards economic models based on service industries. In the developed world investing in heritage tourism has been seen as an easier option for urban renewal than investing in local industry or farming (Rykwert 2000). Heritage in this context has come to be considered a tradeable commodity.

For many historic towns and cities, tourism is directly seen as the economic benefit that cultural heritage generates. This is emphasised by donor funding and agencies like the World Bank directly promoting tourism as the economic output of investment in heritage conservation (Bandarin and Van Oers 2012; Labadi and Logan 2016). For small or medium sized historic towns, especially those that have remained on the margins of industrial and post-industrial development, the urban heritage has become a tangible and tradeable asset. While the urban fabric, safeguarded in the absence of development pressures, appeals to visitors for being characterful and picturesque, tourism interest generates opportunities for conservation and the re-use of redundant buildings (Orbaşlı 2000a).

For many European historic towns tourism growth in the second half of the twentieth century was incremental and in many cases not the immediate objective of area-based conservation projects. The opening up of Eastern Europe to tourism in the 1990s, highlighted the impact tourism could have on historic town centres without sufficient lead-in time to plan for some of the consequences (Orbaşlı 2000a). In places like Prague in the Czech Republic, locals were rapidly priced out of central historic areas and the popular haunts they had frequented for decades, only for these to become party destinations for more affluent western European visitors attracted by the low prices. Furthermore, in the absence of local business acumen, such markets are flooded by outside investors with ready capital and more experience in the field.

The impacts of tourism growth have been even more obvious in South East Asia, where tourism-based conservation initiatives are often fast-tracked and accompanied by aggressive outside investment. Several recent cases are highlighted in Labadi and Logan's edited volume *Urban Heritage, Development and Sustainability* (2016). In both Luang Prabang in Laos and Hoi An in Vietnam, local communities have been displaced from historic areas through development pressures and inevitable gentrification. Even where projects have set out to work with and empower local communities, rapid tourism development and pressure on services regularly generates adverse impacts on locals and in particularly those who are on the physical, social and economic periphery. Another case examined in the same publication is the rapidly changing tourism landscape in Havana, Cuba where the heavy economic dependence on tourism is driving approaches to conservation and creating a local 'underclass' (Hill and Tanaka 2016). While many will lament the loss of a way of life in a place, others celebrate the economic opportunities, that tourism has provided a new lease of life and regenerated a place in economic and social decline (Di Giovine 2009).

One of the outcomes of growing tourism value has been an over-emphasis on the outward appearance of buildings and the creation of what have become 'stage-set' places (Orbaşlı 2000b). Since the 1970s grant schemes have been substantially more generous towards façade and streetscape improvements than improvements to conditions within historic buildings (Figure 5.6).

[INSERT FIGURE 5.6 ESKISEHIR HERE]

Historic town tourism rarely focuses simply on the built heritage of a place. Unlike a monument, museum or archaeological site, one of the fundamental attractions of historic towns are the intangible values including the 'life within' of everyday activity. For visitors it is an opportunity to engage in the life of a place, one that is often seen to integrate past traditions and sometimes also a way of life. This can, however, create a paradox, especially the concept of 'living heritage' whereby initial preservation approaches are developed around protecting the local population as part of the attraction of a place. This can be seen as a concern for the local community as they are objectified as a tourist attraction and expectations are placed on the image and lifestyle that is portrayed. Boyer (1996: 5) notes how in the present time 'traditions have been so thoroughly "invented" or homogenized, and "history" so absolutely marketed or commodified' that they no longer represent the collective memory of communities. As historic areas are increasingly curated to appeal to visitors there are frequent references to Disneyfication or musealisation (Nelle 2009). Writing on the old Medina of Fez in Morocco, Radoine (2003) laments the loss of local life as the old medina is turned into a 'a zoo for tourists to visit', with bazaars that are more reminiscent of 'Ali Baba's adventures' (Radoine 2003: 473).

However, high levels of preservation achieved in places where tourism has become a major player is also leading to development stagnation, through over compensation of conservation practices. In many World Heritage Cities that attract significant numbers of tourists, authorities can become over cautious when it comes to change in fear of jeopardising a valued status. Heritage credentials are further compounded by formulaic approaches that lead to heritage sameness rather than celebrate the unique qualities of places that have made them attractive to visitors. A growing abundance of chain stores, and similar heritage style street furniture in the urban realm only serve to diminish the very qualities that made these places unique and attractive to visitors.

Meanwhile, the sustained and growing attraction of some European historic towns and many others globally are leading to serious impacts of overcrowding. Places like Venice and Rome are frequently reported to be 'under siege' from tourism. Venice for example receives over 20 million visitors a year on what is a precarious island ecology, often described as being in danger of sinking (Figure 5.7). Increases in cruise ship tourism are also adding undue visitor pressures to Venice and many other tourist cities like Florence and Amsterdam. With the vast majority of visitors arriving as day trippers, the economic benefits to the locality are also restricted. In Asia places like Luang Prabang in Laos and Lijiang in China have become poster cases for rapid tourism growth following World Heritage Site inscription (Opschoor and Tang 2011; Staiff and Bushell 2013).

[INSERT FIGURE 5.7 Venice HERE]

For many places the challenge lies in finding ways in which tourism can be effectively managed to continue generating economic benefits but not hindering local life or diminishing a place's identity. Meanwhile, the shifting patterns of tourism and the way experiences are mapped through social media, coupled with growing visitor numbers and the increasingly well documented pressures on the urban fabric and the population of popular tourism destinations is generating a need for new forms of heritage management. In this respect, soft measures such as interpretation and communication of heritage values, dispersal through highlighting other attractions and experiences that increase the time spent in a destination have to be balanced with harder regulatory measures of traffic management, land-use planning, licensing and taxation.

Flagship projects and branded quarters

Beyond the tourism destination values associated with historic towns, there is a recognition that historic buildings and areas can play a positive role as drivers in economic and social regeneration (English Heritage 1998). Using redundant buildings for new functions often sets the scene for others to follow. A number of imaginative reuse schemes in the UK and the US proved how flagship projects could change the use and perceptions of entire neighbourhoods. The reuse of the old market hall in Covent Garden in London and Boston's Faneuil Hall and Quincy Market in the 1970s showcased how historic buildings could be re-used to re-shape downtown urban areas into destinations popular with locals and tourists alike (Figure 5.8). These schemes, and many others that have followed since, have focused on a combination of alternative and specialist retail, creative industries and the arts or nightlife.

Flagship projects have continued to dominate urban regeneration and increased in scale. Particularly evident are large scale cultural projects, a trend that is largely attributed to the Spanish city of Bilbao's Frank Gehry designed Guggenheim Museum, and commonly referred to as the Bilbao effect. The Guggenheim Museum, intended to kick start the regeneration of Bilbao's nineteenth century industrial waterfront, has become the central attraction to short and transient visitation patterns (Keating and de Frantz 2004). Today, city authorities around the world are commissioning iconic buildings with the power to shock or stand out to act as catalysts for the experience economy, such as the Peter Cook designed Kunsthaus which is deliberately in stark contrast with the urban tissue of the old town of Graz in Austria (Lorentzen and Hansen 2012). Research has shown that such prestige projects are often centrally based, and bring limited, if any benefits to peripheral areas and socially marginalised groups (Evans 2001).

[INSERT FIGURE 5.8 Tate HERE]

Culture as a development tool is attractive to policy makers, especially as it strengthens brand identity. In many instances the 'cultural city has been engineered as a representation of city, regional and national identity' (Tallon 2013: 231). As cities have moved from centres of production to places of consumption, historic area regeneration is often coupled with the promotion of creative economies. Strongly linked to the experience economy, creative industries are promoted to counteract the decline in other economies such as production, especially for small to medium sized European cities (Lorentzen and Hansen 2012). In developing countries, many historic cores continue to be places of cultural production, and offer visitors an authentic experience (Throsby 2015). The creative sectors are often well suited to the spatial characteristics of historic neighbourhoods, and this in turn leads them to be branded as cultural or arts quarters.

These types of branded quarters are now evident in places like Beijing and Shanghai, and have become destination districts closely linked to tourism (Zukin 2010). They are less likely to be places of cultural production or creativity, but merely places of consumption. Culture has become a branding tool and the lifestyle choice of the urban elite, whereby its benefits are not equitably experienced across social groups (Tallon 2013). Evans (2001) emphasises that culture-led regeneration schemes will only really work and remain sustainable if a place already has established arts and cultural industries that are 'rooted in the community' (Evans 2001: 215). An image driven idea that copies what happens elsewhere can only be short-lived. Genuine cultural quarters speak

for themselves and do not need to be branded to be recognised, nor does cultural production in a city have to be limited to a designated district.

One off events, designations as cities of arts or culture, hosting a range of festivals are also seen as opportunities for the power of events to shine a light on heritage or to change the perceived image of a place. Both are likely to generate a short term buzz around the place, but often need to be supported by other initiatives in the longer term. Glasgow, for example having been host to numerous events including European Cultural Capital and City of Architecture still fails to be conceived as a 'heritage' destination or centre of cultural activity. This is also linked to maintaining a city's attractiveness to tourism as places need to offer alternative or different experiences to remain competitive and stand out as being different (Lorentzen and Hansen 2012). Historic areas can thus play a vital part in providing a unique backdrop for events, including festivals, that make use of the city's existing buildings and spaces. Labadi (2016) considers this approach as one of title accumulation and critiques the absence of better linkages and integration across events. Others have questioned the relevance of cultural events to all sectors of a city's population (Keating and de Frantz 2004).

Other forms of urban branding can be linked to ethnic identities, often of immigrant populations. In many of these cases what is being celebrated is an historic urban form and architectural character that has been re-appropriated for the expression of another culture, that of the incomers. However, Little Italys, Chinatowns and Irish quarters have today been re-formulated as destination and entertainment districts rather than centres for the communities they once housed.

Industrial areas

As districts that were once the heart of manufacturing or trading ports fall into decline, they become peripheral to the city, but also represent opportunities by opening up new urban spaces, such as along a waterfront (Marshall 2001), or for new uses and economies to replace manufacturing. In a similar fashion to culture-led regeneration in historic neighbourhoods, arts and creative-industries based regeneration is also a commonly adopted approach to industrial areas. In the US, for example, culturally-driven urban regeneration has manifested itself in revitalisation of post-industrial waterfront and downtown areas (Evans 2001). Boston and Baltimore set the scene in post-industrial waterfront regeneration, creating a new identity or image for the city (Stratton 2000). In Liverpool in England, the music scene became the catalyst for the regeneration of areas like Ropewalks and the reuse of redundant industrial buildings (Gilmore 2004). One of the most recent additions to the

genre is the Carlsberg District of Copenhagen, where the former brewery buildings have been transformed into a mixed use commercial district aimed at attracting creative businesses. The use of the area also supports the city's sustainable transport credentials as it is easily accessed by bike or public transport from the city centre (Johanson 2019).

Former industrial areas range from inner city industrial quarters such as the Jewellery quarter in Birmingham, UK, to more peripheral sites, including decommissioned military sites such as naval dockyards and cold war sites that were deliberately cut off from the city fabric. They can be in urban, suburban or rural locations and this will also impact on regeneration options (Stratton 2000). The industrial heritage also includes coal mines, gasometers, pumping stations and the like. Many will include moving parts and machinery which are component of their heritage value, but can add to the challenge of repair.

Compared to other types of historic quarters, industrial heritage areas present some new challenges, including large expanses of redundant buildings, a disconnection from the city and location within areas of social and economic deprivation caused by the redundancy of the industry they served. The rehabilitation of industrial buildings and areas may therefore require incremental development, occupying a building in stages and generating revenues as the remainder is rehabilitated (Eley and Worthington 1984). These large projects often require different models for development as the ownership is broken up, with partnerships, including private, public and third sector organisations often developing different parts of the site. Many early projects have required public sector leadership to kick start regeneration, although this is not always the case, particularly after the financial crisis of 2008 (see chapter by Carpenter in this volume). In the UK the Custard Factory redevelopment in Birmingham in the early 1990s became an exemplar for other projects by demonstrating how low cost interventions providing space for small start-up businesses and an incremental approach could deliver economic and social benefits, rejuvenate an under-used area in close proximity to the city centre and trigger other regeneration projects (Porter and Barber 2007) (Figure 5.9).

[INSERT FIGURE 5.9 Custard Factory HERE]

The buildings themselves are often sturdily built to serve their designated function and therefore also hold qualities of robustness that aids their adaptability in multiple ways. Former warehouses and factories have been converted to loft style apartments, artists' studios and offices, power

stations into state-of-the-art museums and galleries while gasometers have been used as the shell for signature apartment buildings. In Germany, former mines have been transformed into monuments, museums and leisure parks. Reconnecting industrial landscapes back into the fabric of the city, sometimes referred to as mending the city, has also generated opportunities for diverse and creative urban design projects (Broadbent 1990).

Reimagining and reimagining historic urban quarters

A growing popularity of historic quarters as tourism and leisure destinations is also leading to the deliberate production of heritage places. In the Arabian Gulf States, for example, a growing interest in urban heritage conservation can be linked to the growth of tourism and a need to articulate local identity. Since the old 'traditional' neighbourhoods were abandoned several decades back, substantial conservation and often re-construction efforts have been necessary to generate the type of environments attractive to tourism and leisure uses.

In the UAE the historic quarter (heritage area) of Sharjah has been largely rebuilt to accommodate tourist functions, while the Dubai Municipality Heritage Department has rebuilt the entire Shindagha district based on photographic evidence, with adjustments to accommodate new through roads. In Bahrain, the conservation of Manama Souk is criticised as being a 'simplistic' project that has ignored the socio-economic fabric in favour of 'the visual effects of design' that 'recalls some symbols of the oriental city', which may be of interest to tourists, but does not constitute regeneration (Ben Hamouche 2008). A new 'Heritage Village' in Kuwait City, replaces older quarters that were demolished in the 1950s and 1960s (Mahgoub 2008), while Souk Waqif in Doha, Qatar is largely rebuilt in a form that never existed as a 'showcase for Doha's past' (Adham 2008: 240).

Far from being isolated cases, spaces that on one hand replicate the qualities celebrated in historic quarters and on the other hand idealise the past to fit in with a desired image and imagined identity are emerging everywhere. In the United States, the 'traditional' buildings of Santa Fe in New Mexico are in fact concrete frame buildings plastered to give the impression of adobe, so as to be attractive to tourism (Al Sayyad 2001). In Singapore, shop houses were reconstructed in the shadow of skyscrapers largely to appeal to the tourist market and to compete with the genuine heritage assets of neighbouring Malaysia. As these quayside areas were developed by single developers as leisure and entertainment destinations, they denote a re-imagined urban culture that is more closely

aligned with patterns of global consumption than with local heritage and tradition (Yuen 2013: 133) (Figure 5.10).

[INSERT FIGURE 5.10 Singapore HERE]

In these processes, 'conservation' is open to interpretation, rebuilding is common practice and reinterpreting building location, form, materials and details is seen as acceptable. The more ambitious projects have been the rebuilding of part or even entire historic quarters, often based on scant evidence. Most of these rebuilt historic quarters are intended for cultural, tourism and leisure uses that rarely relate to their original functionality, and are described by one commentator as a process of 'manufacturing' heritage and historicising the tourist landscape (Al Sayyad 2001). These types of approaches pose questions on authenticity and on how authenticity is judged. Notably, very few buildings are used again for their original function and as most were already abandoned any link to what might be termed 'living heritage' is already lost. So even if authenticity of place, design, material and craftsmanship were to be achieved, devoid of life these mock townscapes would still fall short of delivering a truly authentic experience to visitors. However, this authenticity should not be taken as a given either, as the living character of a city is also continuously shifting as the city evolves (Bandarin and van Oers 2012).

What we are witnessing is the deliberate creation of heritage places based on their consumption values. From Shanghai to Dubai to London's Kings Cross, artificial streetscapes, sometimes barely discernible from shopping mall interiors, are serving a consumer marketplace, and in doing so diminishing the value of material and cultural authenticity of historic urban places.

MAKING URBAN CONSERVATION WORK

Urban life consists of multiple dimensions: spatial denoting location and movement; physical denoting buildings; social denoting connections, meanings and networks, temporal denoting experiences and encounters; all of which will be underpinned by a viable economy, because all cities depend on economic activity to survive. Collectively, all these dimensions influence practices of urban conservation and regeneration and the culture of a place (Figure 5.11).

[INSERT FIGURE 5.11 Oporto HERE]

National policies play an important role in how urban regeneration is implemented at the local level (Tallon 2013). In the UK for example, regeneration policy focus in the pre-1980s period is characterised by community, arts and social movements and emerging cultural industry practices. From the mid-1980s, however, there is a clear shift to liberal planning and private sector-led development (private-public partnerships) and the emergence of economic value as a key driver of regeneration (Colantonio and Dixon 2011; Evans 2001). Most large scale regeneration projects undertaken in the UK in the first decade of the twenty-first century are distinctly characterised by the greater role developers have come to play. Furthermore, economic downturns globally have allowed developers to place pressure on councils to relax planning rules and to push through less socially sensitive schemes. Grand projects such as the renewal of the entire Tarlabaşı district of Istanbul in Turkey, involve developers re-organising an entire district through a land amalgamation and façade retention scheme, and then marketing it for its historic character. This case is elaborated by Ikiz-Kaya in the Istanbul case study chapter in this volume.

In a climate of consumption, commoditisation and hyper-gentrification some of the inherent qualities of historic towns linked to sustainability and resilience need to be re-recognised. In the same way that buildings need to adapt to change, so do urban quarters (Verebes 2014). In times of rapid change and growing uncertainties – such as those around climate change – cities need to become more agile. Historic buildings, places and cities have already adapted to change many times over and therefore it can be argued that they have higher adaptive capacity to change, and in their multiple character areas (tapestry of different uses, building and space typologies) can also experiment with small and incremental changes that will make them more resilient (Moss, 2015). This does not preclude the need for innovation, but requires more agility. Twentieth century models of urban planning are often too rigid to accommodate the flexibility necessary to respond to twenty-first century problems (Verebes 2014). Some traditional adaptive and generative models may be a more appropriate response to counter the dynamic of rapidly changing urban conditions and environments (Hakim 2007).

In the context of rapid urban growth and development, historic neighbourhoods often have to contend with a change and contrast in the scale of new developments. While clusters of buildings or even entire neighbourhoods may be preserved, they are increasingly losing their contextual link to the city as the originally low and medium-rise neighbourhoods that surrounded them are replaced by high rises. This inevitably reinforces the enclave characteristics and functionality of historic areas.

This is further accentuated in the growing socio-economic class fragmentation, and the polarised wealth and social patterns of the post-Modern city (Tallon 2013).

Each place is different and it is these unique qualities that make them attractive as places to live in, work in and visit. Place specific projects that recognise that each city and urban place has its own inherent dynamic are more likely to be successful than importing ready-made solutions from elsewhere. In the same context, small and incremental investments often prove more effective than large-scale heritage-led regeneration projects supported by one off funding packages, where benefits can be short lived (Labadi 2016). Economic diversification is also important for resilience and vibrancy, and sustaining various forms of production and tenure can yield longer term benefits than transient single type uses. There is never just one solution to regeneration, it is often a combination of approaches and initiatives, that often need to be combined with committed local engagement and strong political leadership (Keating and de Frantz 2004).

CONCLUSION

Urban conservation and regeneration have evolved from two parallel processes, on the one hand the broadening of the heritage conservation agenda and its recognition of building clusters, groups and places as having value, and on the other hand, regeneration of urban areas to initially improve social welfare and latterly to improve economic opportunities. In the twenty-first century these processes have become intertwined and closely linked. Heritage in the urban environment resides in well preserved traditional neighbourhoods, former industrial quarters, specifically designed settlements of the twentieth century, in urban form and morphology as well as intangibly in urban identity and culture, in traditions that shape city life and the social networks that are its lifeblood. As such it is a spatial, political, economic and social concern, necessitating the active participation of a wide range of stakeholders.

There is today a growing recognition that these components cannot be isolated from one another, and in fact collectively form an urban ecosystem that is part of the larger urban conurbation, its hinterland and wider city region. Nonetheless, designation of areas for protection purposes, as World Heritage Sites, conservation areas or branded quarters that increase their appeal also alienate or decouple historically valuable areas from the city as a whole and sometimes also from the social networks and communities that have shaped them. Meanwhile, within the neo-liberal economic model, regeneration is increasingly predominated by both small and large scale investor-led approaches. In places, pressures from investors seeking to cash in on heritage value, can

significantly damage the very heritage and atmosphere of a place. Urban heritage is increasingly being commoditised and reproduced to the detriment of the social systems that support it.

Historic urban areas need to be recognised as the outcome of long and complex transformations. Although they maintain a certain inherent 'character' they are also part of a larger whole into which they need to remain integrated. At a time when cities themselves are facing challenges of rapid urbanisation in a period of volatile financial markets which have social, political and urban ramifications (Verebes 2014), there is an accepted need for more flexible planning practices and new methodologies to respond to these changes (Zeiderman *et al.* 2017). In the process of transformation there are lessons to be learnt from traditional means of urban development and management, and there will be lessons to be learnt from incremental and integrated approaches to urban conservation. At the same time, urban conservation, regeneration and architectural regeneration must also adapt to many of these new challenges and pressures.

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Captions

Figure 5.1 As part of a multi-faceted project to restore Humayun's Tomb in Delhi, India, The Aga Khan Historic Cities programme worked closely with local groups in the neighbouring Nizamuddin neighbourhood, improving the education, health and welfare infrastructure, and revitalised public spaces that could be used by the inhabitants (Photograph by Aylin Orbaşlı, 2016)

Figure 5.2 A small bus navigates the narrow streets of Florence, Italy as more and more historic towns have had to develop solutions that help maintain the vibrancy and activity of the centres (Photograph by Aylin Orbaşlı, 2010)

Figure 5.3 An artisan bakery is the first sign of a new creative community establishing itself in London's Hackney Wick. This was followed shortly afterwards by developers advertising 'warehouse style' apartments (Photograph by Aylin Orbaşlı, 2017).

Figure 5.4 The High Line project in New York which has seen the repurposing of an old railway line into an urban park has also accelerated development and triggered gentrification in the Chelsea neighbourhood (Photograph by Aylin Orbaşlı, 2018)

Figure 5.5 In London's Covent Garden, once hailed as an exemplar project for the inspired re-use of a historic market building, independent and artisan shops have been replaced over time by chain outlets and most recently high-end global brands (Photograph by Aylin Orbaşlı, 2017)

Figure 5.6 A scheme in Eskişehir's historic Odun Pazarı district in Turkey with a focus on 'street sanitisation' has resulted in the restoration of exteriors and a deliberate heritagisation of streets (Photograph by Aylin Orbaşlı, 2017)

Figure 5.7 High numbers of tourists significantly impact on the historic fabric of a fragile historic town like Venice and disrupt everyday life driving residents away from the historic islands (Photograph by Aylin Orbaşlı, 2017)

Figure 5.8 The Tate gallery located in a former power station in London's Bankside illustrates the creative approaches to the re-use of a former industrial building as well as the impact a cultural icon can have on its immediate neighbourhood. (Photograph by Aylin Orbaşlı, 2007)

Figure 5.9 The incremental and 'cheap and cheerful' regeneration of Birmingham's old Custard Factory in collaboration with local creative and start-up businesses set the scene for establishing creative industries in the regeneration process (Photograph by Aylin Orbaşlı, 2004)

Figure 5.10 In Singapore former historic areas are developed and managed by a single entity for leisure and entertainment functions (Photograph by Aylin Orbaşlı, 2013)

Figure 5.11 Despite its status as a World Heritage City, the old town of Porto in Portugal continues to be home to its lower income occupants. This engenders strong social networks and a sense of a lived in place to prevail, but means funds available for conservation are also limited. (Photograph by Aylin Orbaşlı, 2010)